AIR POUCH
PRIORITY

~~UNCLASSIFIED~~ CONFIDENTIAL
(Security Classification)

DO NOT TYPE IN THIS SPACE

179

FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

714.00(W)/2-1954
F790005-0763

FROM: AMEMBASSY, GUATEMALA 11/22/76 719
DECLASSIFICATION DATE DESP. NO.

TO: THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON. ARA OFFICE

PER

REF: FADRC FOI CASE NO. 640259

DATE: February 19, 1954

FEB 24 1954

25 For Dept. Use Only	ACTION	DEPT.	
	OLI-10	INFO	ARA-2 ARA/R-2 ARA/RA-2 3-8-54
	REC'D 2-28	OTHER	USIA-8 ARMY-35 NAVY-39 AIR-14 CIA-13

SUBJECT: Joint Weeka No. 7 for State, Army and Air Departments from S.

Action Office Symbol D-2

SUMMARY

Foreign Minister Guillermo TORIELLO and the other members of the Guatemalan delegation to the Caracas Conference met twice this week to discuss tactics, but gave no public indication as to how they planned to meet the agenda item on Communist intervention in hemispheric affairs. The Administration press and political parties, however, continued to indicate that Guatemala would counter-attack with charges of "foreign intervention" in its affairs.

Meanwhile, the Arbenz Administration made no effort to hide the growing Communist influence. Waldemar BARRIOS Klée, Communist Acting Chief of the National Agrarian Department, and Carlos Manuel PELLECER, Communist Deputy and labor leader, presided at a ceremony at which $400-$600 were given as the proceeds of the 1953-54 coffee crop to each of 683 campesinos organized under the Agrarian Reform law into a producers' cooperative, a form favored by the Communists. Recent meetings of the Administration's "National Democratic Front" revealed that four of the ten delegates meeting with President Arbenz were avowed Communists, and the Salvadoran Ambassador reported that at a recent dinner party Arbenz warmly greeted José Manuel FORTUNY, ranking member of the Communist party, and seated himself at a table with Fortuny, Pellecer and Víctor Manuel GUTIERREZ, the Communist who leads the organized Guatemalan labor movement.

In the propaganda field, also, Communism was more open. The Communist party newspaper front-paged anti-U.S. atrocity pictures, and the party circulated a poster showing a villainous Uncle Sam reaching out with bloody hands for Guatemala. The Communist-line Nuestro Diario finally publicly admitted that it had government support.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Preparations for the Caracas Conference: Following last week's announcement that Guatemala would attend the Caracas Conference, there have been two announced meetings of the Guatemalan delegation under the chairmanship of Foreign Minister Toriello to decide on conference

JCH111:cs
REPORTER

~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

ACTION COPY

714.00(W)/2-1954

tactics. The only information to come forth from these meetings was an indication given by Toriello to the press that Guatemala would support the establishment of an Inter-American Court of Justice. There was no further information on Guatemalan tactics with respect to the item on Communist intervention in the hemisphere, but Administration and Communist newspapers and political groups continued to clamor that Guatemala would go to Caracas to defend its sovereignty against "foreign intervention," which in their terminology means U.S., not Soviet, intervention.

DOMESTIC AFFAIRS

Communist Prominence in Agrarian Reform Underscored: Waldemar Barrios [illegible], Communist Acting Chief of the National Agrarian Department, and Carlos Manuel Pellecer, Communist Deputy for the Department of Escuintla, directed a ceremony this week at a former state coffee farm at San Andrés Osuna where 683 members of a farmers' producers' cooperative established under the Agrarian Reform Law each received $300-$600 as his share of the proceeds of the 1953-54 coffee crop. Pellecer, in making the only speech of the day, told the campesinos that they could now see for themselves that the results of the Agrarian Reform were quite different from what had been predicted by its enemies.

Apart from again illustrating the manner in which Communists identify themselves with the Agrarian Reform, this ceremony illustrated two facets of current Communist Agrarian Reform tactics. First, by selecting and publicizing a case in which campesinos were awarded $300-$600 apiece--probably more money than the vast majority had had at one time--the Communists sought to persuade skeptical conservative campesinos that the Agrarian Reform will benefit them immediately. Second, the ceremony publicized the success of the producers' cooperative form of farming which, as the Department will recognize, is a preparation in Communist theory for eventual collective farming. During the week Administration papers also gave prominence to reports that another cooperative, at San Francisco Miramar in the Department of Quezaltenango, would soon distribute about $550 to 191 campesinos from the sale of the coffee crop, and to the formation of a new cotton growers' cooperative during the week in the Escuintla area.

Actually, these two cases cannot be taken as anything like a fair index of the results of the Agrarian Reform Law since they both involved cooperatives exploiting producing coffee lands of the former State Farms and not individual campesinos working their plots of formerly uncultivated land expropriated from private owners. The latest National Agrarian Department statistics, covering through January 31, claimed that 514,000 acres had been distributed to 53,000 campesinos, but of this only 52,000 acres were being worked in farmers' cooperatives by 6,664 campesinos.

Further Evidence of Communist Growth: Recent meetings of the Administration's "National Democratic Front" have revealed that four of the ten representatives of that body who meet with President Arbenz are avowed Communists. They are José Manuel Fortuny and Alfredo GUERRA Borges representing the Communist Partido Guatemalteco del Trabajo (PGT) and Víctor Manuel Gutiérrez and José Alberto CARDONA representing the Confederación General de Trabajadores de Guatemala (CGTG), the national labor federation which has achieved status as a full-fledged member of the Front. The Confederación Nacional Campesina de Guatemala (CNCG), which has also achieved full status, is represented by two leaders who have collaborated with the Communists as are the Administration parties PAR and PRG. (The PU is temporarily not represented due to its current internal quarrels.)

Meanwhile, the Salvadoran Ambassador, Colonel FUNES, has stated privately that at a dinner party recently he had been embarrassed to be asked to sit at a table where President Arbenz had José Manuel Fortuny, Secretary General of the Communist PGT, at his right, and Víctor Manuel Gutierrez and Carlos Manuel Pellecer also at the table. The Ambassador was particularly struck at the warm and familiar greeting given by the President to Fortuny, the country's ranking Communist.

An "anti-intervention" meeting held by the Department of Escuintla PGT Committee also illustrated Communist growth in the rich Pacific slope agricultural area. The party newspaper Tribuna Popular reported that "91 delegates from the different Basic Organizations" attended, which indicates that card-carrying party members in the Department may number as many as 900 since the national average membership of Basic Organizations (cells) has been reported to be about 15.

PSYCHOLOGICAL

More Violent Anti-American Propaganda: Following the Guatemalan Government's insinuation in late January that the U.S. was behind an "international plot" to overthrow the Arbenz Regime (Weeks 5), Communist propaganda facilities have led the Administration press and political organizations in a sharpened anti-American campaign. Thus, the Communist Tribuna Popular of February 14 front-paged a group of atrocity photos [illegible] corpses on Nicaragua's streets at the time of the elimination of Augusto César SANDINO and his followers in 1933, and blamed these deaths on "Yankee bombs," although the U.S. Marines had actually gone at the time. Moreover, throughout the week, not only the Communists, but the Administration newspapers and political parties played up Sandino's assassination as a result of U.S. intervention and a mass meeting in commemoration of his death is being planned. Meanwhile, for the past two weeks or more, the Communist PGT has been circulating a large, colored poster showing a green Uncle Sam

UNCLASSIFIED

F790005-0766

reaching across the globe to grab Guatemala with blood dripping from his hands over Mexico and Puerto Rico.

Administration Newspaper Partially Admits Government Support: The pro-administration Nuestro Diario, whose foreign news and editorial material usually fit the Communist mold, finally virtually admitted the recurrent charges of the independent press that it lived on government subsidy. It said in a February 11 editorial refuting an editorialist of the independent press, "He thinks that the fact that this newspaper has a publicity contract with the Guatemalan Government installed by the voice of the majority of the Guatemalan people is a blemish which permits the dailies in the service of the international monopolies to speak loudly."

Catholic Anti-Communist Program: After several years of relative inactivity in the radio field by the Roman Catholic Church, a discreet 15-minute anti-Communist radio program directed by a Guatemalan Paulist father began broadcasting on January 12 under the title of La Vida Inmortal and after several weeks of broadcasting straight news it began on February 15 to introduce one anti-Communist content gradually. The program is presented under the auspices of the alumni of Guatemala's Central Orphanage and the Paulist director stays in the background.

FOR THE AMBASSADOR:

William L. Krieg
Counselor of Embassy

Contributors:

Agrarian Reform Data - E. H. Miller
Psychological - H. E. Urist

cc: C.A. Missions & Routine

UNCLASSIFIED

fil